



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

FWS RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1949

"Over the world as a whole, there is probably a keener interest in the development of marine resources than ever before," Director Albert M. Day stated in the Fish and Wildlife Service annual report to Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman which was made public today.

In his report, which covers the activities of the Service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1949, Director Day said that "awareness of the immense potentialities of the sea has led the United States to organize programs of investigation in the central Pacific and in the waters of Bering Sea, while marine research in our North Atlantic waters is being carried on to an extent greater than ever before possible."

Director Day also stated that in order to meet the needs of the ever-increasing numbers of persons turning to the out-of-doors, and especially to wildlife for recreation, "the Service is strengthening its programs for improving land as wildlife habitat, maintaining refuges for wildlife, and replenishing streams and lakes through artificial propagation of fish."

Mr. Day explained that some of the most pressing problems of the moment are the result of the increasing development of the Nation's river basins. "These projects, as proposed or in actual operation, modify radically the habitat of many of our migratory fishes, of waterfowl and other birds, of some large game animals and of many small fur-bearing mammals of the river bottom lands." The Service, according to its Director, "is devoting the greatest possible energy and ingenuity to the satisfactory solution of the problems presented."

Highlights from the report, under topic headings, follow:

River Basin Development and Wildlife Needs.---During fiscal year 1949, 231 reports and investigative studies on proposed river basin development projects were completed for the Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Soil Conservation Service, Forest Service, and other agencies. Forty of these reports concerned projects in the Missouri River Basin.

Marine Fishery Research.---Because the pilchard fishery of the Pacific coast, which for many years led all U. S. fisheries in total production, has had several years of extremely small catches, the Service is investigating the extent and success of pilchard spawning to learn the causes for apparent fluctuations in abundance

and the oceanographic conditions in North Pacific waters which may be related to these changes. The activities of the Service's vessel, the Black Douglas, are closely integrated with those of vessels of the California Division of Fish and Game and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, which are engaged in similar studies off California.

Much of the work of 25 cruises of the Albatross III on the great North Atlantic fishing banks was devoted to a census of total fish populations. Data on operation of year, number and size of fish caught, and temperature were obtained at 170 trawl stations.

Organized research by the Service to determine causes for the "red tide" which in 1947 killed millions of valuable food fishes in Florida west coast waters began during the year. The 60-foot vessel Pompano is used to obtain data on oceanography, planktology, and chemical constituents of the coastal waters from the mouths of fresh-water rivers to the 100-fathom line.

Research in Wildlife Management.--Definite progress has been made in the field of repellents for mammals. Under a grant from the Quartermaster Corps, approximately 100 candidate materials were evaluated as repellents against rats when applied to materials for packaged goods supplied to the Service by commercial firms in the newly developed "rattery" established at the Federal Center west of Denver.

At the 14 Cooperative Wildlife Research Units located in Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah and Virginia, approximately 150 research projects were conducted, including investigations on a variety of small and big game species, waterfowl, predators, fur animals, land use-wildlife relationships, control methods, and many other phases of wildlife management.

The National Wildlife Refuge Program.--Total revenue for fiscal year 1949 from all economic uses on the refuges, including the disposition of big-game animals, and surplus products, was \$343,130. The 205,000-acre Stillwater Wildlife Management Area, located in Churchill County, Nevada, was activated early in 1949. Intensive development of 20,000 acres was started to reclaim waste irrigation waters for waterfowl purposes.

Federal Aid to State Projects for the Protection of Wildlife.--With an appropriation of \$11,276,687 to finance the Federal Aid program during fiscal year 1949, the Service approved a record total of 612 projects submitted by the 48 States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands under the terms of the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1938. Thirty-five states bought wildlife lands in 76 areas, totaling about 163,000 acres; in addition, 9 states leased almost 115,500 acres. Since more than 75 percent of the nation's wildlife is produced on agricultural land, much of the acreage thus acquired will be used to insure the continued protection of wildlife in the face of mechanized and intensive agriculture.

Maintaining the Inland Fisheries.--A great deal of emphasis was placed on the rehabilitation of the salmon runs in rivers where dams have cut off spawning routes. Establishment of new runs below the dams, increased hatchery production and better fishways were planned. Over one and three-fourths billions of eggs and fishes were produced by Federal hatcheries in calendar year 1948. The rehabilitation of a number of fish hatcheries was started.

Utilization of Fishery Resources.--The 4.6 billion pound catch of fishery products in 1948 brought commercial fishermen an estimated income of \$325 million.

These products retailed for nearly a billion dollars. Higher operating costs and foreign competition made marketing of the domestic catch somewhat more difficult than in previous years.

Cooperative Control of Predators and Rodents.--Sportsmen, stock raisers, farmers, and foresters reported greater benefits received during fiscal year 1949 from the control of harmful animals than in any previous year. Percentages of loss to domestic and game animals from predators fell to new lows. Many herds of sheep were able to range without herders, and without predator losses. Credit for this goes to the use of modern control methods such as the airplane, compound 1080, and the "coyote getter", compiled with excellent cooperation by States, counties, cities, and associations of farmers and stockmen.

Administration of Alaska Fisheries.--Products of the fishing industry in Alaska in 1948 amounted to 306,162,827 pounds valued at \$116,948,814. Of this, salmon products represented 69 percent in volume and 87 percent in value. A total of 196 persons and concerns were apprehended and arraigned for violations of the Alaska fishery laws and regulations in 1948. A total of 70,142 fur-seal skins were taken on the Pribilof Islands in 1948; the annual census of the herd indicated its size to be 3,837,131 animals.

Administration of Federal Statutes for Protection of Wildlife.--In fiscal year 1949 the Service had 6 regional supervisors of law enforcement and 73 U. S. game management agents engaged in enforcing the Federal statutes. For violations of these game laws, 3,172 convictions were obtained, with fines and costs totaling \$148,810. Jail sentences of 2,593 days were also meted out to violators.

Cooperation with American Republics.--The fishery mission to Mexico, established in 1942, was extended in 1948 for a two-year period. The most significant development of the past year was the signing on January 25, 1949, of a fishery treaty by Mexico and the United States, which provides for the scientific investigation of tuna. The ornithological survey of Cuba, inaugurated in 1948 at the invitation of that Republic, was resumed in January 1949. The Service continued its program of training qualified students of other American Republics in various phases of biological science and management in relation to the conservation of fishery and wildlife resources.

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